



# LEAGUE OF MICHIGAN BICYCLISTS

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Chairman Hansen, honored committee members, thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB 4781, 4782, and 4783.

My name is John Lindenmayer. I am the Executive Director for the League of Michigan Bicyclists. LMB's mission is to promote bicycling and the safety of bicyclists on Michigan roadways. Our membership is comprised of individual cyclists, bicycle shops, clubs, organizations, manufacturers, and event organizers. Ultimately, we represent the interests of anyone who bicycles in Michigan, which the outdoor industry estimates to be two million individuals. These bicyclists, from casual to competitive riders, contribute an estimated \$668 million per year in economic benefit to our state's economy according to a recent MDOT study.

With the rapid growth of e-bikes, coupled by common sense regulations outlined in these bills, we believe the number bicyclists in our state will grow in the coming years. This not only will contribute further to our state's tourism sector but also promote health and well being, and provide additional mobility options for individuals of all abilities. E-bikes help overcome barriers to cycling such as distance, endurance, age, and disability. They allow people to participate in cycling who otherwise couldn't or wouldn't.

Michigan law has not kept up with technology. Despite being the fastest growing sector of the bicycling industry, e-bikes currently are not classified under Michigan law. This causes confusion among retailers, e-bike users, law enforcement, and land managers. Lacking a clear definition, some law enforcement lump e-bikes in with mopeds since they have a motor. This rigid position means they are not technically allowed on non-motorized facilities including on-road bike lanes or trails.

In Michigan a moped is defined as "A two- or three-wheeled vehicle with a motor which has no more than 50cc piston displacement producing two brake horsepower or less." This definition does not fit e-bikes which lack pistons entirely and do not operate like mopeds, scooters, or other motorized vehicles. E-bikes most closely resemble traditional bicycles in both appearance and operation.

Over the past two years, LMB helped to engage diverse stakeholders to build consensus around the bill package before you. This inclusive outreach included individual bicyclists, the bicycle industry and retail representatives, various trails organizations, environmental groups, state agencies like MDOT, DNR, and MSP, and representatives of local units of government, and many others.

Part of this outreach included a series of public e-bike demonstrations, including events where a number of lawmakers had opportunities to try out different types of e-bikes. Upon returning from these test rides, common responses were: 1) "That was so much fun," coupled with big smiles and joyful stories about riding as a child; 2) "That's not what I thought an e-bike would be like;" and 3) "I don't see how e-bikes will pose problems on our roads or trails." Participants are quick to acknowledge that e-bikes are very similar to traditional bikes and thus should be treated as such.

Studies show that crashes and serious injuries involving bicyclists tend to decrease as the number of cyclists in a community increase. This is referred to this as safety in numbers. E-bikes not only offer new opportunities for recreation and tourism, retail, and increased physical fitness, but they also have the potential to help improve overall safety on our roads through increased ridership.

The major bicycle manufactures have coalesced around building e-bikes that meet the three-class system outlined HB Bill 4782. This class system has recently been codified into law in Arkansas, California, Colorado, Illinois, Tennessee, and Utah. Similar legislation is currently being advanced in Arizona, Connecticut, Ohio, New York, and Wisconsin. It is worth noting that, Michigan's legislation is unique in that it offers even more local control than other states, allowing communities and land use managers to be more or less restrictive with e-bike regulations, specifically on trails.

In closing, I'd like to thank the committee once again for the opportunity to testify and urge your swift action in support of this package.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John Lindenmayer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" and last name "Lindenmayer" clearly legible.

John Lindenmayer  
Executive Director  
League of Michigan Bicyclists